

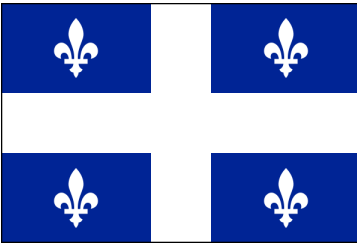
ARTS MIDWEST WORLD FEST

Study Guide Canada and Québec Language & Culture

About Canada

Canada is the second-largest country in the world. It has an area of nearly 4 million square miles and is made up of ten provinces and three territories. Canada became a country in 1867, but the story of the people and the land that would become Canada is much older. Many events over the last five hundred years have shaped the way Canada looked at the time of Confederation.

About Québec



Population: 7,560,592
Area: 1,542,056 square kilometers (595,391 square miles)
Capital and Population: Québec; 508,000
GDP Per Capita: U.S. \$32,584
Date Formed: July 1, 1867
Motto: *Je me souviens.* (I remember.)

More than 7.5 million people live in Québec, the oldest and largest province in Canada. A land mass three times the size of France, 80% of the population is concentrated along the St. Lawrence River. The province produces 21% of the country's manufactured goods and a major portion of its iron, copper, asbestos, paper, and lumber.

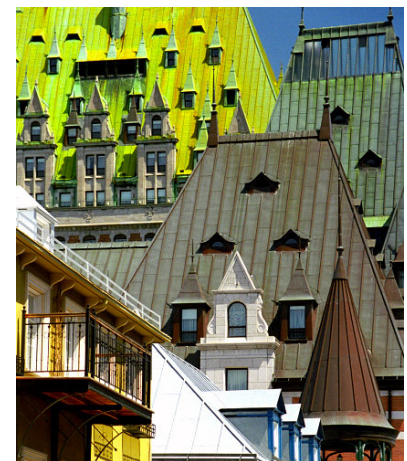
Montreal accounts for nearly half of Québec's population while Québec City, the capital of the Québec nation, has a population of about 700,000. French is the language spoken at home by 83% of people in Québec, while 11% speak English and 6% another language. Half of Québec's active population speaks both French and English, and 16% speak a third language fluently. The eleven aboriginal First Nations living in Québec (about 1% of the population) use either English or French, but mostly speak an indigenous language as their mother tongue.

First inhabitants: The Aboriginal peoples

When Europeans settled on the shores of the St. Lawrence River in the 16th century, people had been living there for several thousand years. Each nation had its own language, beliefs and culture. Québec's first European settlers were of French origin and from the earliest days of colonization, the French formed strong bonds with the aboriginal people.

While these First Nations and European settlers often had difficult relations, the meeting of civilizations also involved the exchange of ideas, objects and ways of doing things that were adapted by each culture to best suit its needs. Native Americans were introduced not only to iron tools and weapons, new foods, and woolen cloths and blankets, but also alcohol and European diseases such as smallpox and influenza. Europeans learned how to survive in the wilderness, how to preserve food and how to use plants for medicinal purposes.

When North America was ceded to the British following the Seven Years' War in 1763, the French took a path that was different from the rest of Canada. They came to be known as French Canadians. Today the term Québécois (pronounced: kebe' kwa) is largely replacing French Canadian as an expression of cultural and national identity.



Buildings in Québec City.
Photo by Flickr user [the-o](#)

The predominant French Canadian nationalism and identity of previous generations was based on the protection of the French language, the Roman Catholic Church, and Church-run institutions across Canada. In contrast, the modern Québécois identity following the “Quiet Revolution” of the 1960s is secular and based on a social democratic ideal of an active Québec government promoting the French language and French-speaking culture in the arts, education, and business within the Province of Québec.

Politically, this resulted in a push toward more autonomy for Québec and an internal debate on Québec independence and identity that continues today. Québec is the second most populous province, and its natural resources and varied industries are a vital part of Canada’s economy.

Québec's culture is the very symbol of its identity, joining its French roots together with its Amerindian heritage, while also being influenced by its proximity to the United States and by today’s multi-ethnic population. Québec is proud to possess a culture of its own that reflects its reality and its history. Very few countries of Québec’s size have such an international presence.



The Québec Parliament Building was designed by architect Eugène-Étienne Taché and was built from 1877 to 1886.

Photo by Flickr user [meddygarnet](#)

Let’s learn French with Québécois phrases:

Hello, Good day	Bonjour [bo zhur]	Yes	Oui [wee]
Do you speak English?	Parlez vous anglais? [par lay voo on glay]	No	Non [non]
I don’t understand.	Je ne comprends pas. [zher nuh kom prawn pa]	How are you?	Comment ça va? [ka ma sa va]
Excuse me.	Pardon, excusez-moi [par daw, ex coo say mwah]	Fine, thank you.	Trés bien, merci. [tray bee-en mer see]

How much do you know about Québec?

- True or False: Québec is the largest province in Canada.
- Initially, what was this area called and why?
- What is the capital of Québec?
- Describe the flag of the province of Québec.
- What is the motto of Québec?
- Discuss the language and pronunciation differences between Québécois French and French. Why do you think there are differences? Think about the other languages with the similar issues and discuss: i.e. British & American English

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Canadian Museum of Civilization
<http://www.civilization.ca/cmc/education>

Learn French online
<http://www.frenchlessonscanada.com>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/>

Aboriginal Canada Portal - <http://www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca/>
 Contains links about aboriginal language, history & culture in both English and French

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